

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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O R 271350Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6013

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

S E C R E T JIDDA 432

EXDIS

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD AND DAMASCUS; KUWAIT PASS DOHA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENGR, XF, SA

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF ARAB GOVERNMENTS RE LIFTING OF OIL BOYCOTT

1. SAUDI INTERPRETATION OF ARAB VIEWS ON LIFTING OIL
BOYCOTT NOW IS AS FOLLOWS:

A. LIBYA AND IRAQ ADAMANTLY OPPOSED. THIS IS TO
BE EXPECTED BUT IS OF LITTLE CONCERN HERE. SAUDIS KNOW
THAT BOTH COUNTRIES HAVE NOT RESTRICTED PRODUCTION AND
NEITHER IS SCRUPULOUS IN ENFORCING BOYCOTT.

B. KUWAIT OPPOSED. SAUDIS ARE DISTURBED BY PUBLIC
STATEMENTS BY KUWAIT MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND EMIR THAT
DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT IS NOT SUFFICIENT REASON TO LIFT
BOYCOTT. THEY BELIEVE KUWAIT ERRED IN COMMITTING ITSELF
PUBLICLY.

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C. ALGERIA AND SYRIA WAVERING. THEY COULD AGREE TO
LIFTING BOYCOTT NOW BUT WOULD PREFER TO WAIT UNTIL FIRST
STAGE OF DISENGAGEMENT COMPLETED OR UNTIL SECOND STAGE
(INVOLVING SYRIA) IS BEGUN.

D. EGYPT AND PROBABLY ABU DHABI WOULD GO ALONG WITH IMMEDIATE LIFTING OF BOYCOTT IF THERE IS A BROAD ENOUGH ARAB CONSENSUS TO DO SO. EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT SADAT IN THE PAST HAS TOLD SAUDIS, ABU DHABI, AND PRESUMABLY OTHERS, THAT BOYCOTT SHOULD BE LIFTED WHEN DISENGAGEMENT OF FORCES IS COMPLETED, I.E. IN ABOUT A MONTH. THE EGYPTIANS NOW, HOWEVER, FAVOR QUICKER ACTION.

E. SAUDI ARABIA AND QATAR FAVOR IMMEDIATE LIFTING OF BOYCOTT ALTHOUGH SAUDI PRESS REPORTS CONSISTENTLY THAT THIS WILL BE DONE BY THE ARAB OIL MINISTERS IN TRIPOLI, LIBYA FEB. 14.

2. KUWAITI OPPOSITION IS MOST BOTHERSOME TO SAUDIS WHO DO NOT LIKE TO APPEAR TO BE LESS "ARAB" THAN THEIR SMALL NEIGHBOR. PRACTICALLY, HOWEVER, THE VIEWS OF SYRIA AND ALGERIA ARE MORE IMPORTANT TO SAG.

3. WE HAVE ASKED SAUDIS THEIR VIEWS ON THE UTILITY OF THE U.S. OR SAUDI ARABIA PUTTING DISCREET PRESSURE ON KUWAITIS, ALGERIANS AND SYRIANS. THEY HAVE REPLIED THAT IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IF ANY OF THESE THREE WERE TO SUPPORT THE SAUDI VIEW, BUT THEY DOUBTED THAT ANY INTERVENTION BY THE U.S. WOULD BE HELPFUL. THE SAUDIS WILL BE MAKING APPROACHES OF THEIR OWN AND THE EGYPTIANS (IN THE PERSON OF ASHRAF MERWAN) WILL BE BACKING THEM. THE SAUDIS, IN SHORT, THINK THEY CAN HANDLE THE MATTER THEMSELVES.

4. COMMENT: IN SPITE OF THEIR PAST ASSURANCES THAT THEY PREPARED TO MOVE UNILATERALLY IF THEY GOT NO OTHER ARAB SUPPORT, WE DOUBT IF THE SAUDIS ARE REALLY PREPARED TO BE THE ONLY ARAB COUNTRY TO LIFT THE BOYCOTT. THEY ARE CONFIDENT THAT THIS WILL NOT BE NECESSARY AND THAT THEY WILL BE ABLE
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TO WORK WITH A FAIRLY BROAD CONSENSUS IN FAVOR OF THE U.S.
AKINS

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